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The annual report of Medical Officer of Health  
to the Dursley Rural District Council.

Population in 1891	12,166
Area in Acres	26,521
Inhabited Houses	3,116.

The district consists of 11 parishes viz—  
Cam, Coaley, Dursley, Kingswood North  
Ribley, Rymphfield, Owlpen, Slimbridge,  
Stinchcombe, Aley and Wotton Under Edge.  
Inspector of Nuisances, Mr. J. Robinson,  
Silver Street, Dursley.

To the chairman and members of the  
Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

Situation  
of  
District

The rural district of Dursley  
is situated on the sides and buttresses  
of the Western Cotswolds, which consist largely  
of the white-lime stone. Many of the  
houses are built upon the hill-sides,  
or on the abutments which run out  
to different distances into the valley of  
the Severn.







Slimbridge is the only parish wholly situated in the valley; so that for the most part the district is naturally well drained. The chief streams which drain the district are the Cam, which drains Aley, Dursley and Cam, and receives a part of the drainage of Coaley empties itself into the Berkeley and Gloucester canal.

The Ribley Brook which drains North Ribley empties itself into the Matford Brook.

The Dyers Brook and Alderly Brook which unite at Kimpwood, these drain Wotton-under-Edge and Kimpwood, and joins the Wickwar Brook.

The Wickwar Brook is a boundary between the Dursley Rural District and the Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury Rural Districts.

None of these streams are used for drinking purposes by human beings.

The water supply of the district is as follows:-  
The water supply of Wotton-under-Edge has now possessed its own water supply within a certain area since October 8<sup>th</sup> 1894. This is collected on land belonging to Lord Fitzhardinge called "Damllyn's Brake" and conveyed to a reservoir on the side of Coombe Hill, and thence distributed to the town.

For the extension of this supply to Bradley Green I made a visit of inspection and enquiry on March 4<sup>th</sup>.







There are 9 cottages and one farm-house with two wells, one not reliable the other insufficient in dry weather; I recommended the extension of the service to Bradley Green, this has since been done.

The summer of 1896 was very dry and it severely taxed the resources of the Wotton-under-Edge supply to meet the requirements for domestic use, in fact so low was it, that at the top of "The Butts" and on the "Gloucester Road" some days the inhabitants got no water although it was turned on to supply the town daily.

The village of Knapwood has its own water supply, the source of which is on the side of the hill facing Wotton-under-Edge.

Coaley also has a water supply, this is from Spring Tynning.

All these supplies are under the control of your Board.

All the remaining parishes are supplied by springs, and deep or shallow wells, and some of these are not satisfactory. A spring at Hollywell just outside the water area Wotton-under-Edge being supposed to have become polluted, a sample was collected by the Inspector of Nuisances each week for three consecutive weeks; which I examined but found each sample







fit for domestic use.

Many of the inhabitants in Dursley are supplied by wells on their premises, but on the higher parts of the town and also for the Workhouse the water has to be fetched from the Broadwell which is a copious stream of water near the centre of the town.

For some time past various schemes have been suggested for supplying Dursley with water, and that scheme which found most favour and which has been pushed the farthest was to bring water from the hill side under Coaley Wood. A distance of over two miles but on higher ground than Dursley, so that it could be supplied by gravitation. Tunnelling was carried on during the summer of 96 to bring to one point of exit all the water that could be collected and while some were sanguine that the supply would be sufficient for Dursley without appreciably affecting the supply to Coaley, for the gathering ground is near the Spring Tynning which is the source of the Coaley supply. Others were in doubt about it and the opposition by the Coaley Parish Council is such, that the question is almost in abeyance.

Something over £211 have been spent by the District Council in the execution of these works.







The  
sewage  
sewers

At the end of the year the Inspector of nuisances was engaged in collecting information as to the exact needs of Cam for a water supply.

The sewage of Dursley is partly water borne, partly collected in dry earth closets and partly in the old fashioned privy vaults.

The water borne enters the stream called the Cam.

One of the sewers empties itself into the Broadwell stream, this passes through a mill which is a very unsatisfactory state of things. This I have before pointed out ought to be taken out of the stream, and carried to the bottom of the town.

The sewers are for the most part very defective being built of loose stone.

The scavenging is done once a week, when the dry earth closets are emptied.

The sewage of Watton-under-Edge is partly water borne but only to a small extent most of the sewers of Watton-under-Edge are built of loose stone.

All empty into the Dyer's Brook.

Dry earth closets being by far the most common method of collecting it.

The scavenging is done once a week.

The other parishes have no proper sewers.

The commonest method of collecting the sewage is by the privy vault which is







often very large and most unhealthy.  
Many bad throats - have their origin  
in foul privies, I firmly believe.  
Wherever it is possible we advise  
dry earth closets, or shallow vaults  
which can and must be emptied  
frequently.

Inspection  
Work

I have inspected in different parts of  
the district - Nuisances complained of  
to the number of sixteen. These nuisances  
consisted of foul privies, pigsties, ditches,  
gutters, choked drains, sewers &c.  
Most of these inspections were made  
with the Inspector of Nuisances, who  
took them in hand to get them re-  
mediated.

Unhealthy  
dwellings

We visited and inspected a house in  
Lower Cam under Part II Housing  
of the Working Classes Act 1890. But  
found the Act did not apply.

We made five visits and inspections  
during the year of houses supposed  
to require cleansing and whitewashing  
under Sec 46 Public Health Act 1875.

Those which needed cleansing and  
whitewashing the Inspector took in hand  
to get cleansed and lime washed.

Over-  
crowding

I was not called upon by the Inspector  
to make one inspection of over-crowding  
during the year.

New  
dwellings

I with Mr Robinson inspected eight







new dwellings houses during the year,  
to ascertain the water supply under  
Sec 36 Public Health (Water) Act-1848.  
And three in the parish of Dursley  
under the above Act. and the  
"New Laws" relating to "New Buildings"  
erected in the "Contributory Place of  
Dursley".

Water Analysis Twelve samples of water were examined  
by me during the year. One sample  
found unsatisfactory unless boiled.  
The remaining eleven were satisfactory.

Lodging houses The two common Lodging Houses in  
Watton-under-Edge were inspected by  
us in April and October of 98. There is  
no common lodging-house in Dursley.

Wake-houses In October we inspected the wakehouses  
and slaughter houses in the district.  
There were 35 wakehouses inspected  
all of which were satisfactory.

Slaughter houses There is no wakehouse in the district  
wholly under-ground nearly all are  
well lighted.

The slaughter-houses were inspected were  
34. All but one was quite satisfactory.

Infection In addition to the above I made (often  
in concert with the Inspector of Nuisances) 29 visits  
and inspections of houses and surround-  
ings in which dangerous infectious  
disease of some kind was present.  
Those cases not visited by us were visited







by the Inspector alone, which came to our notice, and in which a visit was thought - advisable.

Scarlatina was prevalent in Dursley in the beginning of 96 and cases continued to occur up till end of May. It broke out in May in Wotton, Wotton-under-Edge this outbreak appeared to be kept in bounds fairly well, as but few cases followed it in Wotton-under-Edge. Origin doubtful. Six cases occurred in Knipswood, this clearly had its origin in an imported case, but did not spread. Isolated cases occurred in other parts of the district, but there is every reason to believe that Isolation and disinfection kept the disease from spreading.

The most notable disturbances from dangerous infectious disease during the year was in a case of small pox which occurred in Dursley in March. This there can be no doubt was contracted away from the town. It remained the only case in the district. It was as quickly isolated as possible, and to do so a vacant house called the Moors and situated in the parish of Coaley, was rented for one year. The cost to the district of this case in the year is over £115.

Vaccination was vigorously carried out in the district. This together with many other precautions which were taken may be looked upon as means which prevented







the spread of the disease from this patient, as well as also the importation of fresh cases.

Closing  
of  
Public  
Elementary  
Schools

The Public Elementary Schools were closed in Slimbridge for 21 days on account of Whooping-cough in January.

In Watton Under-Edge for 107 days on account of Measles in September.

In Kingswood for 28 days on account of Measles in September & October.

In Dursley the National Schools were closed 43 days on account of Measles and the Wesleyan Day School Dursley for 28 days for the same reason. In October November & December.

In Cam the Infant-School Lower Cam were closed on account of Measles for 14 days in December.

Prosecution  
Attendance  
at  
Meetings  
of  
Council  
Isolation

There was no prosecution during the year. I attended thirteen meetings of the District Council during the year.

In Isolation and Disinfection we have two powerful means of preventing the spread of Dangerous Infectious Disease. Isolation to be effective should be employed immediately a case of dangerous infectious disease arises, and continued until the patient ceases to be infective. Isolation can rarely be carried out properly, especially in this the case in Cottage homes so that to be able to carry it out effectively an hospital for the pur-





-poor is necessary in every Sanitary District. The diseases most commonly isolated are Small pox and Scarlatina. We were able to isolate Small pox in 1896 with good results.

Disinfection can be carried out - during and after the disease. The use of disinfectants is useful but should not be relied upon to the exclusion of plenty of fresh air. Boiling cotton-goods for 10 minutes is effective. This cannot be carried out - in the case of woollen goods, so that to disinfect such things as Blankets, Mattresses, beds and clothes it is necessary to employ heat.

We have no steam disinfectors, and as to get the benefit of disinfection by steam we have been obliged to send such goods away. It is obvious that to disinfect cotton-goods and the rooms that have been ~~occupied~~ by infected persons and yet not disinfect beds & bedding is only a half and half measure and not likely to prevent its springing up again or to stamp out the disease.

The destruction by fire of all such goods is a very expensive way of preventing the spread of disease. There has never been any systematic attempt at disinfection in this district after Measles.

Vital Statistics | In the estimation of the population at all ages living at the middle of July 1896.





I have adopted a down-grade scale and that - is taking the average rate of decline for the last thirty years before the census year 1891. The loss is 38' per annum, and the estimated population is 11967.

The births exceed the deaths by 114 in 1896 this is called the "Natural Increment". In this district in the past for so long a period both immigration and "Natural Increment" even (if at the same rate as at the present) were unable to balance the loss to the district by emigration.

Births

The vital statistics for the year are as follows: viz. - There were 310 births registered during the year which were 17 more than were registered in 1895. Of these 149 were males and 161 were females, therefore 12 more females were registered than males.

Usually the males preponderate, and in 1895 there were 25 more males registered than females.

The birth rate for 1896 per thousand of estimated population living at all ages at the middle of the year is 25.98 in 1895 it was 24.40.

This is called "the crude birth rate" and is very low.

The birth rate for Gloucestershire was in 1895 about 26.67.





Deaths For England and Wales in 1894 was 29.6.  
The deaths registered during the year were 196 of these 95 were males and 101 females.

The general death rate for the year per thousand estimated population is 16.37 in 1895 it was 15.74 and in 1894 it was 15.6.

The general death rate for the County of Gloucester for 1895 was 15.47. That for all England and Wales for 1894 was 16.6. This is a higher death rate than that of the two preceding years, but is not due as far as I am aware to diseases which are considered preventable, as the zymotic death rate is but a little higher than in those years.

The annual death rates for the different districts are as follows: - viz: - Dursley district - 16.48, Dley district - 14.49 Hotton. Under-Edge district - 16.04.

The deaths arranged according to table (A) at various ages are as follows: -

Under one year 31

One & under five 19

Five & under fifteen 6

Fifteen & under twenty-five 8

Twenty-five and under sixty-five 53.

Sixty-five and upwards 79

Thirty-three lived between 70 & 80 and twelve & between 80 & 90.

Infant Mortality - The deaths under one year are 31, and the rate of Infant Mortality





that-is (the deaths under one year occurring in the year to a 1000 births) 100.

In 1895 it was 81.8 in 94 it was 109.2  
For the County of Gloucester for 1895 it was 123.6 For all England and Wales in 1894 it was 137.

The rate of Infant Mortality for the whole district is low compared with all England and Wales.

But the deaths in the Watton-Under-Edge district under one year were 18 that gives a rate of Infant Mortality for the Watton-Under-Edge district of 144, which is high which may probably be accounted for by the fact that the Watton-Under-Edge district is largely manufacturing, and in such districts many Mothers go to work at the Mills, and place their babies out to be nursed, when the absence of the Mother constant care, together with the exposure to inclement-weather lay them open to catarrhal affections which are often fatal to the young. Five died of Bronchitis. Then again such children are generally artificially fed, this is also a frequent cause of Intestinal troubles and sometimes of convulsions.

Five died of Convulsions

A number of children are prematurely born many of these die <sup>very</sup> young and as all have to be registered will run up.





the rate of Infant Mortality.  
Three died of Premature birth.  
The seven principal Zymotic diseases  
were the cause of death in eleven  
person. Eight of these were under  
five years of age.  
One died of Scarlatina, two of Diphtheria  
three of Measles, and two of Whooping-  
cough. Of the three deaths over five  
years of age.  
One from scarlatina, one from Diphtheria  
and one from Typhoid Fever.  
The Zymotic death rate per thousand  
of estimated population is '91 in '95 it was  
'66 and in '94 it was '66. It was not given  
in the report for the County of Gloucester  
for '95.  
For all England and Wales in '94 it was  
1.76.  
No deaths occurred in the Eley district from  
any of the above Zymotic diseases.  
One death was caused by membranous  
Croup, and one from Erysipelas.  
No death occurred in the district from  
Small pox, Typhus, Continued, Relapsing  
or Puerperal Fever, Cholera, Diarrhea,  
or Erysipelas.  
There was one death from Rheumatic  
Fever and one from Influenza.  
There were 31 deaths from the Acute Res-  
piratory diseases; and the death rate





per thousand of estimated population is 2.5. The same number of deaths from these diseases as in 94.

There were 12 deaths from Phthisis.

Eighteen from Heart Disease, and two deaths from Injuries were registered in the district during the year.

Compulsory Notification of Dangerous Infectious Disease is not in force in this district - and such being the case the contents of Table ("B") are very defective and not worth the trouble of preserving and tabulating. The only available source being the District-Medical Officer's Relief Books. The information from this source is usually very meagre. Other sources are very doubtful or uncertain and cannot be considered much better than "scraps." Nothing methodical or systematic.

Table  
"B"

Table ("B") contains the following information - that there was one case of small pox in the district. Forty three cases of scarlatina, four cases of Diphtheria, Two of Typhoid, seven of Typhus, and nineteen cases of Measles. These are taken exclusively from the District-Medical Officer's Relief Books, and of these thirteen occurred in the Workhouse. Making a total of 76 cases of Infectious Sickness.





Sanitary Science is constantly advancing and Public Health is a large subject, so that there is always plenty of material for your consideration. One amongst others is the erection in a suitable place for a permanent hospital for the isolation of two Dangerous Infectious Diseases.

Another to further consider the adoption of the Act for the Compulsory Notification of such Dangerous Infectious Diseases as are in the schedule.

And again the Dursley Water Supply is still to be worked out.

Also the Barn Water Supply is an unfinished subject.

These beside many other matters of minor importance will call for the careful consideration of the Council.

Appended is the Annual report of work done by Mr T Robinson Inspector of Fairances.

I remain

Yours Obedient Servant

Francis Jos. Joyce

Medical Officer of Health

February 23<sup>rd</sup> 1907





To the Dursley Rural District Council

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report  
of Nuisances Abated for the year ended  
December 31<sup>st</sup> 1896

Dwelling Houses  
Overcrowding Abated 4  
Closed as unfit for habitation 0  
Cottages repaired & Disinfected 31  
Water supply remedied 3

Closets  
New provided 3  
Rebuilt & repaired 6  
Cleaned 26

Drains  
New provided 5-  
Defective remedied 25-  
Foul ditches cleaned 6

Other Nuisances  
Offensive refuse removed 10  
Pig nuisances abated 6  
Offensive cesspools cleaned 5-  

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133

Number of Nuisances abated without 43  
Statutory Notices served 50  
Summons served 0  

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133

I have visited and inspected 48 registered Dairies  
and Milkshops in this district and found  
them satisfactory. There has been one case of  
Infectious Disease and death on one of the registered  
premises, every precaution was taken at the  
time & well disinfected after.

Thomas Robinson  
Sanitary Inspector.













1) Table of Deaths during the Year 1896 in the County of Franklin according to Diseases, Age, and Localities.

[illegible]



